

### THE COUNCIL OF REFORMED CHURCHES.

The "Council of Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System" met in the Prytania Street Church, New Orleans, in adjourned session, on Thursday, March 11, at 11 a. m. Only four of the original seven bodies entering into the organization were represented, and the total attendance was less than half the membership.

The following were present: from the Northern Presbyterian Church, William Henry Roberts, John Gray Bolton, John Balcom Shaw, Walter A. Brooks, S. S. Palmer, W. H. Black, J. E. Clarke, Wm. J. Darby, John B. Laird, B. P. Fullerton, T. H. Perrin, Louis A. Bowman, J. L. Twaddell, E. R. Perkins and Foster Copeland; from the Southern Presbyterian Church, W. McF. Alexander, W. T. Hall, J. F. Cannon, J. S. Lyons, J. R. Howerton, Russell Cecil, T. C. McRae, Thos. H. Somerville and R. T. Simpson; from the Dutch Reformed Church, J. Preston Searle and J. W. Beardslee; from the German Reformed Church, Frank Grether.

Dr. Searle was president, Dr. Roberts, clerk, and Dr. Brooks, recording secretary. The opening prayer was made by Hon. Thos. H. Somerville.

The various committees were filled out by the appointment on them of those present. The committees were on Foreign Missions, Dr. Cannon, chairman; Home Missions, Dr. Shaw, chairman; Work Among the Colored People, Dr. Howerton, chairman; Christian Education, Dr. Lyons, chairman; Correspondence, Mr. Bowman, chairman, and Finance, Mr. Perkins, chairman.

A special committee was appointed to draft a memorial to Messrs. George E. Sterry and Darwin R. James, members of the council who have died since the last meeting.

Provision was made for morning and afternoon sessions, the afternoons after the first day to be devoted to hospitalities and courtesies of excursions tendered the members. Luncheon was served the first day at the Hotel Denechaud.

The Home Mission Committee presented a report at the afternoon session. There were in it four main recommendations. The fourth was that a conference be called between the executive officers of the council and representatives of the various boards or executive agencies of the Church. In the discussion the point was made that this council could make its requests only to the original bodies appointing it. Dr. Roberts and Dr. Lyons held this position. This provision of the report was withdrawn for revision.

The evening session was of the nature of a popular meeting, following a sermon. Dr. Searle preached an admirable sermon on Paul's phrase, "A Servant of Jesus Christ," stressing the Master, the bondman, and the service. It was a wholesome, strong, suggestive discourse. Following this Dr. George Summey was introduced to make a welcoming address in behalf of the Presbyterians of New Orleans. For the members' own sakes they were welcome, for the Churches they represent they were twice welcome. For the cardinal principles for which they and their Churches stand as witnesses they were thrice welcome. He laid special emphasis upon the Church's duty as a witness.

Dr. William Henry Roberts responded. After a graceful introduction, drawing attention to the fact that John Calvin was of a Latin race, and after defending the recent Federation of Churches concerning which Dr. Summey expressed a fear that such words as "plenary inspiration," "vicarious atonement," if uttered, might have stampeded it, he devoted himself eloquently to the five "sovereignities," the sovereignty of God in the universe, of the Bible in authority, of Christ in redemption, of Christ in headship over the Church, and of the principle of service. Upon the latter point he gave an argument but with no purpose of discussing the topic, and disclaiming such a design, in favor of organic union.

Only the morning of the second day was devoted to business. Reports were presented on the subjects of Education and Colored Evangelization. Both were discussed at length and withdrawn by the committees for further consideration and amendment. The knotty problem which Mr. Carnegie has made was to the fore, and the pensioning of the professors who are in denominational institutions was more or less adverted to. One speaker characterized the seeking of pensions by surrendering the church schools as selling the Saviour for thirty pieces of money. Drs. Roberts, Howerton, Hall, Bolton, Black, Perrin, Laird, Bowman, Searle, Palmer, Shaw, McRae and Grether took part in the discussion.

Pending the consideration of the report on Colored Evangelization, Dr. J. G. Snedecor, of Alabama, secretary of the Southern church's committee, was invited to address the council. At 1 o'clock a beautiful luncheon was given, in the social rooms of the church, by the ladies of Prytania Street Church. In the afternoon a trip was made on the river, by invitation of the Texas and Morgan Steamship Company, giving the council's members an opportunity to inspect the harbor of their great southern metropolis. In the evening a sermon was preached by Dr. J. Balcom Shaw, of Chicago, on the text, 1 Cor. 12:12, "So also is Christ."

The third day's proceedings were most interesting. They must be reserved for a time when a fuller account can be given. A paper was finally adopted on education, with reference to denominational professors getting on the Carnegie pension fund stricken out. The discussion was lively, the participants being Drs. Roberts, Lyons, Alexander, Palmer, Hall and Black. Dr. Lyons, the chairman of the committee, consented to the striking out of the objectionable clause, but was convinced that it was just and right. He knew and commended Dr. Pritchett, the administrator of the Carnegie fund.

The report of the committee on Foreign Missions, Dr. Cannon, chairman, was adopted. A hearty resolution of thanks was passed. Louisville, Ky., and March, 1910, were chosen as the place and time of the next meeting. Measures were taken looking towards a conference of the Churches on the colored work. Another beautiful luncheon was served by the ladies of the Prytania Street Church. In the afternoon a trolley ride, covering most of the leading streets of the city, was enjoyed.